

(v) a pair of electrodes for creating an electrical field in said electrokinetic medium for moving electrokinetic medium in said second channel, and (vi) a detector, said method comprising:

at least prior to adding said cells to said reservoir, contacting said cells with an agent that affects the status of said cells;

contacting said cells with a labeled ligand which competes with the compound of interest for binding to a cell receptor;

applying an electrical field to said electrokinetic medium in said second capillary channel in a direction to remove liquid from said first channel, whereby cells move from said reservoir into said first channel;

continuing removal of liquid from said first channel while moving said cells to the site of said detector; and

determining the effect of said agent on the status of said cells by measuring the amount of labeled ligand bound to said cell.

7. (Amended) A method for performing cell-based operations identifying single cell status, employing a microfluidic device having a reservoir containing cells for said cell-based operations, said reservoir containing an appropriate viable cell supporting medium, a first capillary channel in fluid transfer relationship with said reservoir, an electroosmotic pump comprising a second capillary channel in fluid receiving relationship with said first channel, an electrokinetic medium in said second capillary channel and a pair of electrodes for creating an electrical field in said electrokinetic medium for moving electrokinetic medium in said second channel, and a detector, said method comprising:

applying an electrical field to said electrokinetic medium in said second capillary channel in a direction to remove liquid from said first channel, whereby cells move individually from said reservoir into said first channel;

adding by electrokinetic means into said first channel a compound of interest for contact in said first channel with said cells;

moving said cells to the site of said detector; and
determining the effect of said compound on the status of said cells.

911 1013. (Amended) A method according to Claim 7, wherein said compound of interest is an antagonist and said determining is a result of variation in signal by cells displacing in said conductive medium a fluorescent agent binding to said cells.

13 16. (Amended) A method according to Claim 14, wherein said agent is contacted with said cells in said channel.

912 14 11 17. (Amended) A method according to Claim 14, wherein said agent is labeled with a detectable label.